

PARENTS SAY

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE SOUTH AUSTRALIAN ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL PARENT COMMUNITIES INC.

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**ABORIGINAL
BASKETBALL
ACADEMY**

Photo by Sarah Reed/ Newspix



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DENTAL SERVICES FOR CHILDREN

The School Dental Service offers dental services for all children under 18 years who live or go to school in South Australia. Dental services are provided by teams of dentists, oral health therapists and dental assistants at clinics throughout South Australia.

Dental care is FREE for all babies, all children not yet at school and most children and young people under 18 years.

The best time for a child's first dental check up is between 12 and 18 months age. For tips on looking after your child's teeth visit the website.

Make an appointment

Call your local clinic to make an appointment for your child or submit your details using the appointment request form on the website and we will phone you to make an appointment.

Children with special needs

If you have a child with special needs please speak to one of the clinic staff about treatment options or concerns.

Interpreters

Tell us if you need an interpreter, so one can be available at your child's appointment.

Emergency dental care

If your child has a dental emergency such as facial swelling, bleeding or trauma, during business hours, please contact one of the dental clinics - you can use the dental clinics page on the website to find a clinic or ring 1300 008 222. If your child has an emergency after hours, call healthdirect Australia on 1800 022 222.

For more information

To find out who can attend SA Dental Service clinics; where to find dental clinics; to make an appointment online; tips on looking after your child's teeth and what you need to know and do in a dental emergency visit the website <http://www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/wps/wcm/connect/public+content/sa+health+internet/health+services/dental+services/dental+services+for+children/dental+services+for+children>

DON'T FORGET...

SAASPC provides information sessions, together with the required resources, for parents and volunteers in schools and preschools on

- **Responding to Abuse & Neglect (Mandatory notification)**
- **Parents on principal/director selection panels**
- **Parent participation and involvement**

If you would like to organise a session contact us - tel 1800 724 640 email info@saaspc.org.au

PRESIDENT'S SAY

On behalf of us all at the South Australian Association of School Parent Communities (SAASPC) welcome to the first issue of Parents Say for 2018. I would especially like to welcome our new readers and hope that you find the information included in each issue useful – we would love to have your feedback about the magazine.

Acknowledgement of Gwen Secomb

Gwen Secomb OAM, a long standing officer of SAASPC, retired towards the end of 2017 after many years of dedicated service to the association and to public education in South Australia. It was Gwen, with her enthusiasm and passion, who encouraged me to become involved with SAASPC many years ago, and I am so pleased that she did. Our full acknowledgement of her work for us is on page 19.

SAASPC

We are a not-for-profit, state wide association and a strong and committed supporter of public education. We do not have any paid staff but the members of our executive committee are a group of dedicated volunteer parents who willingly give up their time and are committed to assisting and supporting parent groups and parents within our government preschools and schools.

We meet with the Minister for Education and Child Development and the Chief Executive of the Department for Education and Child Development to raise concerns and issues affecting parents and to learn what is happening in education from their point of view.

SAASPC is always available to assist with advice or to listen to your concerns and we act as an advocate on behalf of parents. We gather and share information on educational matters and endeavour to keep the parent voice alive by representing parents.

In 2017 the association celebrated 60 years of involvement in education. Over these years we have seen many changes such as in parenting, education, technology and how these impact our children and our daily lives.

We have also found that, like many other groups and bodies, it is becoming increasingly difficult to get new members to serve on our executive, this of course has an impact on how we operate as an association. If you have the time and an interest in education



JENICE ZERNA
PRESIDENT

and would like to be involved with us – just a 3-4 hours a month – do let us know.

Affiliation

Affiliation invoices for 2018, together with a brochure explaining our role, have now been sent to all preschools and schools. Please keep an eye out for it at your parent group or governing council (if you do not have a parent group) and consider joining us for a very modest fee. Affiliation fees help support us in our work and supplement the small operating grant that we receive from the Minister for Education and Child Development. A copy of the invoice can be found on our website just in case yours goes astray.

It is now also possible to join SAASPC as an individual member – and as with the preschools and schools this entitles you to a number of benefits such as complimentary attendance at conference/forums; ability to nominate as a member of the executive committee; to vote at the annual conference and the annual general meeting and to receive SAASPC publications.

Executive meeting 26 March

Throughout the year we hold executive meetings to discuss the work and operations of SAASPC and at a number of these we have a guest speaker. At our March meeting we will have the pleasure of having Helen Connolly, Commissioner for Children and Young People join us. Helen will talk to us about her role and the work she is doing with the children and young people in SA. Anyone who is interested is very welcome to attend – see our website for more information.

Don't forget!

SAASPC is your association.

It is important for us to be able to meet with parents/caregivers to talk about concerns or just to have a general discussion about education, whether it is in a preschool or school, at a meeting or at our annual conference. This is an integral part of our work; and it is one of the most rewarding parts – it is always a pleasure to meet parents and help when we can. If at any time you would like us to visit YOUR preschool or school, no matter how near or how far away you are, we would be delighted to do so – just get in touch.

SAASPC contact details

GPO Box 2126 Adelaide SA 5001 | tel 8272 4640 | freecall 1800 724 640
email info@saaspc.org.au | www.saaspc.org.au | we are also on Facebook and Twitter

**THE HON
SUSAN CLOSE MP
MINISTER FOR EDUCATION
& CHILD DEVELOPMENT**



PREPARING OUR KIDS FOR THE FUTURE

WELCOME BACK TO TERM 1!

A big congratulations to students and their families for another successful year for our schools in 2017. A record 15,175 students completed their South Australian Certificate of Education. This included a record number of students in regional schools and Aboriginal students obtaining their SACE, as well as a record number of young people with a disability completing a modified SACE. 920 students were awarded a total of 1196 merit certificates. These results are a testament to the fantastic work of not only our students but also the support of our teachers, support staff and families.

The 2018 school year is already in full swing – staff, students and their families have settled into their routines and schools are already hard at work helping kids get ready for a productive and interesting year.

It's the job of our schools to set kids up for their future – to help them gain the skills they will need to reach their potential and thrive.

We don't necessarily know what that future will hold, and our society and economy are changing incredibly rapidly. So it's really important that the skills schools teach kids will help them to succeed in fields that might not even exist yet. Kids need to learn not only the basics – literacy and numeracy – but they also really need solid skills in science, technology, engineering and maths.

I'm incredibly proud of the work our government is doing to support innovative learning in South Australian public schools. The \$250m STEM Works program is rolling out state of the art STEM facilities to 139 schools around the State. Many of these are already up and running, with kids using these new learning spaces as part of their day to day studies.

The Building Better Schools program is also starting to roll out a further \$690m worth of other infrastructure projects in 91 public schools. In total, in the past four years alone the State Government has invested over a billion dollars in improving school infrastructure. That means that South Australian kids are getting access to world class facilities in which to learn, explore and create.

We also recently announced that over the next two years we will invest tens of millions of dollars to increase internet speeds by, on average, ten times for public schools and preschools. Further, from next year all year 10 students will receive a laptop, which will be theirs to use throughout senior school and to keep after they finish year 12. These measures are about ensuring that all kids – regardless of parental means, or where they go to school – have access to the technology that is necessary for students to succeed.

We also recognise that different children will have different needs, and some kids need more help than others in order to reach their full potential. That's why we are making sure we have support systems in place for all children – including those who may be going through difficult times at home, or have experienced trauma. We have announced a funding boost of \$57m to provide services to 27,000 students who will receive specialised support from teachers or support staff who will work with them on a one on one or group basis. The funding will also be used for teacher training and development to ensure each student's individual needs are being met.

This comes on top of other measures we have in place to support our kids – from additional speech therapists, more child wellbeing practitioners and more special options for kids with disabilities.

It's all part of our plan for public education in South Australia, which you can view at www.yourpublicschool.sa.gov.au.

We want to give all South Australian kids the tools they need to flourish, because their success is important to more than just individual students and their families – it's also critical for the vitality and wellbeing of our state. Our young people will go on to be the innovators, the decision makers and the entrepreneurs who will drive our economy into the future. I can't think of a better investment to make for South Australia.

DECD PLANS FOR 2018

The start of the school year is an exciting time as students, teachers and the whole education community returns from the holidays refreshed and ready.

I'm keen to update you, as engaged and enthusiastic parents, on the department's plans for 2018.

Delivering improvement in the achievement of every child in every school is our focus. The Public Education Action Plan, which was launched in October, describes how we will achieve that. The plan sets out a system wide program of activity to make sure everyone is working effectively to deliver world class public education and child development in South Australia. We are starting to deliver on that plan, with some key measures to be rolled out in term 1.

Focusing on literacy and numeracy to put the basics first

Your child's school has received extra funds to accelerate students' learning through the Literacy and Numeracy First initiative and Better Schools funding. This money will be used to target support for students of all ability levels. Sitting behind the extra funding will be more support for schools to help them identify and implement the most effective approaches.

A Literacy Advisory Group will be announced soon which will provide strategic input, advice and opinion about education department strategies and programs designed for improvement in literacy achievement. The group will comprise well respected national academics recognised as having high level expertise.

Educating students for the jobs of tomorrow

To give students the higher level knowledge and capabilities they need for the jobs of tomorrow, Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM) is a major focus. Alongside the STEM Works upgrades, which will see upgraded STEM facilities at 139 schools, we are also building expertise in STEM teaching and learning across all years of public education.

The STEM Play initiative introduces science and maths concepts to children at preschool, while a range of professional development activities for teachers and industry based learning opportunities are being rolled out across schools.

We are also working on a new languages strategy to prepare young people to work in a global economy. This will be complemented by an international education strategy to give students the cultural and international awareness and skills they need for jobs and life in a more globally connected South Australia.



ANNE MILLARD
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
PARTNERSHIPS, SCHOOLS AND
PRESCHOOLS
DEPARTMENT FOR EDUCATION
AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT

Help for every student to be their best

This year you might notice more specialised support in your school for students with issues that might stop them from learning or achieving at school. Fifty additional specialists in disciplines such as attendance and engagement, speech pathology, behaviour support and child wellbeing have been engaged to work with children and support teachers and families. The additional staff will bring the total size of the student support team working with our schools and preschools to more than 450.

A new antibullying approach will provide comprehensive responses to bullying including universal training for teachers, cyberbullying grants, student led antibullying forums and information for parents.

Giving our children a head start

In 2018 we will be providing more early learning resources and information for new parents and reading initiatives for families through Raising Literacy Australia. We will also continue to fund lower staff to child ratios in our preschools.

We're also investing in early years infrastructure and the number of children's centres will grow to 47 by the end of the year. Ten more outdoor learning areas will open by the end of 2018, bringing the total to 20.

Supporting our teachers to deliver great results

This year we will establish a Teaching Excellence and Leadership Academy to develop expert teachers and quality leaders.

We are also introducing a new employee wellbeing program and a package of psychological health supports for high risk groups of staff.

Your principal will be busy in term 1 working with their education director and local education team to update your school's improvement plan before the end of March. The improvement plan is an important piece of work and it is well worth asking them about this process and what their goals are in the short to medium term.

As we roll out the Public Education Action Plan principals will see a wide range of tailored, evidence based support designed to help their school achieve those goals. We are demanding high

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PACKING A SCHOOL LUNCHBOX

When children eat well they behave better, are able to listen well and concentrate for longer. Packing a healthy school lunchbox will help children to learn and play well and be happy at school.

Steps to planning a healthy lunchbox

1. Make time to prepare. Have fresh fruit and vegetables, milk and yogurt, bread and crackers all bought in advance.
2. Shop wisely and save money. Buy fresh fruit and vegetables in season to ensure good quality and value for money.
3. Make your own snacks. For example snack packs from fresh ingredients which you can buy in bulk.
4. Look after the environment. Put sandwiches and other items in reusable containers. This uses less packaging and creates less rubbish.
5. Choose a variety of foods from the 5 food groups (see table below).
6. Include a bottle of water. No need for sweetened drinks such as juice, cordial or soft drink as these contain too much sugar which are not good for teeth. Non-water drinkers usually start drinking water with the example of other children. Freeze a small quantity each night and top up with cold water in the morning for a cool summer drink.
7. Keep food cool. In warm weather freeze a water bottle or put a small ice pack in the lunchbox.

What makes a healthy lunchbox?

FOOD GROUP	NUTRIENTS	SUITABLE EXAMPLES TO INCLUDE IN A LUNCHBOX
BREADS AND CEREALS	Source of carbohydrate which is a major energy source for the brain and body	All types of bread – whole meal, multigrain, white, pita or other flat breads, fruit loaf Rice, pasta, crackerbreads or crispbreads, rice crackers
FRUIT	Contains lots of vitamins and fibre Aim to include 1–2 serves of fruit per day	Fresh whole fruits or cut up and placed in a container Dried fruit mix, canned fruit
VEGETABLES	Good source of fibre and vitamins.	Vegetable pieces as a snack such as cherry tomatoes, capsicum strips, snow peas, small corn cob or baby corn spears. Carrot, celery and cucumber sticks. Salad vegetables or coleslaw in a sandwich
DAIRY	Major source of calcium. Include one serve in lunchbox every day	Low fat milk, cheese or yogurt
LEAN MEATS, FISH, POULTRY, EGG, NUTS AND LEGUMES	Protein for growing bodies	Cold meats or chicken. Tinned fish such as salmon, tuna or sardines. Boiled eggs, baked beans, hommus

Remember to involve your children. Take them shopping and let them help choose fruits and vegetables for their lunchbox. Let them help prepare and pack their own school lunchbox

From Nutrition Australia

MYPOLONGA PRIMARY SCHOOL SHOP

Mypolonga Primary School has been running its own business, the Mypolonga Primary School Shop for 22 years.

When the local Post Office, adjacent the school, became vacant, a student suggested turning it into a shop, selling locally made crafts, to teach students enterprise and business skills. The Proud Mary Paddle Boat heard about this and added the Shop to its itinerary. From very humble beginnings the Shop has evolved into a major tourist attraction, visited each Friday by a bus tour from the Paddle Boat and community groups.

Local craftspeople place hand made goods for sale on consignment and the school takes 20% commission. Students in the upper primary class are responsible for all financial record keeping; they calculate how much each consignor needs to be paid, as well as the commission, which forms part of the profits made. The Shop turns over \$18 000 annually.

All calculations in the Shop are mental. The tourists love to see the students tallying sales and being able to calculate and count back change without devices. The school's numeracy results are outstanding: in 2017, year 7 results were higher than the year 9 national average.

Each class also makes goods for sale. The upper primary class produces chocolate coated dried apricots, dried peaches and homemade lemon cordial, the middle primary class sells recipe books and cards, the lower middle primary sells recycled notebooks and the junior primary sells bookmarks and luggage tags.

In 2005 the Shop was relocated onto school grounds. The Shop opens every Friday including public and school holidays, like a real business. While the tour operates, students rotate through a series of tasks including chocolate coating and bagging apricots, selling crafts and student made products, handing out our brochure on the door, greeting visitors and explaining to customers how the books are balanced. All rotations have clear assessment criteria. The motto of the Shop is 'OK isn't Excellent'; developing a model of quality service provision.

An indicator of the impact of the Shop program is when high school students return to work in the Shop in their primary school uniforms during school holidays.





The program has been the recipient of many awards including DECD Public Teaching Award, NAB Schools First and an Australia Day Award. In 2016 the school was inducted into the Brand SA Hall of Fame, for winning the Brand SA award on three separate occasions and two students were invited to present at a conference in Melbourne on how the Shop works.

Rita O'Brien

Principal, Mypolonga Primary School





COMMUNITY LIAISON AT THE HEIGHTS SCHOOL

Healthy relationships, we would all agree, are vital to our wellbeing; they allow us to express ourselves and our ideas in safety. Relationships rely on engagement – two or more people or groups committing to connect. In such relationships, students, teachers and their families find themselves in the very best space to grow and bloom.

As the job title suggests, a Community Liaison Officer has significant interaction with, and commitment to, their school's local community. The focus of this engagement is to establish and develop healthy relationships between the school, parents and caregivers, and the wider community for the benefit of our students.

A major emphasis of my role at The Heights School is to work collaboratively with teachers and volunteers to provide extra support both in and out of the classroom. Parents and caregivers who volunteer are a huge resource for our school; when teachers identify a need in a particular area (that can be facilitated by an appropriately skilled and experienced volunteer) I set about to find someone willing to connect and a new relationship is established.

We are privileged to enjoy a very high level of community involvement, not just from parents and caregivers, but also

local organisations, without which, many of our extracurricular activities could not exist. This extra level of provision from the community greatly enhances student learning and school experience, often providing the one on one support a student may need to reach their full potential. The benefits, however, are not limited to the student who directly receives this extra help. Research has shown that when a parent or caregiver volunteers at school, even outside of their child's own class, their child is more likely to enjoy learning, feel motivated to attend school regularly and see themselves as valued member of their school community.

As you could imagine, one of the time consuming facets of this role is in administration. Managing our 250 plus volunteer list can be a challenging task. In line with departmental procedure, volunteers must be adequately screened, cleared, trained and orientated before being able to assist students in a school setting. Our volunteer code of conduct is reviewed regularly, and checks are run constantly to ensure we are adhering to legislation pertaining to volunteering in schools, and to make certain that volunteers are rescreened and retrained within the mandated time frames.

The remainder of my time is spent coordinating volunteer support to assist with the smooth running of school functions and

events such as celebration evenings, graduations, acquaintance nights, camps, excursions and sports days to name just a few. One of my favourite events to coordinate is our School Volunteer Partnership meetings. These meetings are held each term and give volunteers the opportunity to hear from our Principal, and other members of school leadership personally as they share information about what is going on at the school in a more detailed way than can be communicated through newsletters. At these informal meetings, held over a generous morning or afternoon tea, volunteers are free to approach and converse with our school leadership team in an open environment.

Schools, such as The Heights School, which seek to engage with their community regularly and openly, can be found all over the state. As a rule, I have seen that most parents and caregivers want to be actively involved in their child's school. Even if your school does not have a dedicated Community Liaison Officer, there will be a staff member whose job it is to help you become involved. Your support will be welcomed. Tell us your skills and passions and let us know if you can spare an hour a week or perhaps each fortnight. It's never too late to start partnering with your school.

Kellye Rowe

Community Liaison Officer, The Heights School



Volunteers delivering breakfast program

FAMILY-SCHOOL PARTNERSHIPS

Family-school and community partnerships are an effective way to support and empower positive parent engagement, and bring together family and community resources to enrich student learning and wellbeing.

The Family-School Partnerships Framework (<http://www.familyschool.org.au/files/9413/7955/4757/framework.pdf>) supports parent engagement in education for improved student learning. It was endorsed by Australia's Education Ministers in 2008. The Framework was refreshed in 2017 through a series of supporting materials (<https://www.education.gov.au/key-dimensions-family-school-partnerships>) which provide research insights, practical advice and a range of resources including fact sheets and case studies.



PETER LIND
REGISTRAR, TEACHERS
REGISTRATION BOARD OF
SOUTH AUSTRALIA

TEACHER REGISTRATION

To be employed as a teacher in South Australia a person must be registered with the Teachers Registration Board. Teacher registration ensures a minimum quality standard is applied to all teachers and verifies a person as a qualified teaching professional.

In South Australia, teachers register for a period of up to three years. A teacher's registration is active until 31 January of the third year following their initial registration or renewal of registration. Currently registered teachers who are due to renew their registration must do so during the renewal period which runs from the third week of October through to 31 December each year. To remain registered a teacher must apply to renew their registration at least one month before their registration expires.

There are currently over 38,000 teachers on the Register of Teachers, however their registrations do not all expire in the same year. The Register is divided into three cohorts of teachers and each year only one of these groups is due to renew. The number of teachers on the register changes daily with teachers applying to gain registration to teach in South Australia from interstate and overseas and graduate teachers coming on to the Register throughout the year.

In the 2018 renewal period approximately 42% of teachers on the Register were due to renew their registration with approximately 29% in both 2017 and 2016. This makes the recently completed registration period our largest.

To be eligible to renew teacher registration a teacher must

- complete appropriate Mandatory Notification Training
- consent to a National Police History Check
- consent to an assessment against child protection information held by the Department for Child Protection
- have completed 60 hours of professional learning during their current period of registration.

The renewal application process is completed online. Online renewal has streamlined the process to renew for teachers and allows immediate scrutiny of applications. Secretariat staff assist

with phone and email enquiries from teachers, process payments, submit compliance checks, follow up required documents and finally, print and mail registration certificates.

During the year staff receive and assess the applications of teachers applying to move from Provisional Registration to (full) Registration with large numbers of teachers applying to transition at the same time as renewing their registration. During the renewal period our policy team processed 870 applications to transition to (full) Registration.

Once the renewal period is complete a professional learning audit is conducted where a selection of newly renewed teachers are randomly selected to have their professional learning records examined by our staff. Teachers who renewed by 31 January 2018 completed an average of 101 hours of professional learning in their previous three year term of registration.

During the 2018 renewal over 11,000 applications were processed. The most applications were received in the first ten days of December 2017 when 2166 applications were received. The second busiest week was 18-24 December when 1257 applications were received.

Each renewal period sees a percentage of teachers drop off the Register for a variety of reasons including retirement, relocation interstate or overseas, or career changes.

To remain registered to teach in South Australia, a person must complete registration renewal every three years. Registration is an important process as it ensures a person meets professional standards and is a fit and proper person to have the care of children.

The Board understands that the quality and professionalism of teachers is of significant interest to parents and carers and we welcome the opportunity to work together with parent communities to keep you up to date on the many, and changing, aspects of teacher education and registration. We are committed to working with our stakeholders to raise the status of teaching as a profession.

PARENT GROUPS

What is a parent group

Legislation in South Australia requires that there must be a Council (usually a Governing Council) in each school, and it also provides for the establishment of affiliated committees – which for our purposes are parent groups.

A parent group is

- accessible to all parents and other interested members of the school community
- an independent body affiliated with the Council – not a committee of the Council
- required by its constitution to elect annually a member to represent it on the Council
- entitled to operate its own bank account
- may elect annually a member to represent it on the school finance advisory committee if it is part of a governing school council's consolidated account.

Parent groups take many different forms depending on the needs and wishes of the parents; for example they can be parents and friends groups, class groups, subject groups, support groups, parent networks, friends of the school. Whichever form of group is chosen, a constitution must be forwarded to the preschool/school's Education Director who will send it to the Minister (or his/her delegate) for approval.

Why have a parent group

A preschool/school parent group can

- provide an opportunity for parents and others in the community to meet regularly to express and develop their interest in education
- act as a forum to gain and share information, ideas and skills, especially those relating to the education policies of the preschool/school specifically and South Australia generally and to the wellbeing of their children
- recognise and represent the views of parents and convey these views to the director/principal and the preschool management committee/Council and, where appropriate, to other preschool/school bodies eg finance, fundraising or grounds committees
- provide a regular link between parents, teachers and children
- assist with parental engagement programs
- assist the preschool/school in material and personal ways to benefit the children
- assist parents to develop skills to become involved in the life of the preschool/school and to participate in decision making
- provide valuable assistance in many aspects of the education of children by working in cooperation with the director/principal staff and preschool management committee/Council
- provide an environment of care and concern that can assist and complement that of the professional educators.

Composition and format

A parent group needs a planned structure to carry out its aims and objectives. It is suggested that

- the group should decide on the number of office bearers (and their duties) that are needed for it to function efficiently
- it decides how often it needs to meet
- a committee may be elected at the annual general meeting to assist office bearers in the running of the group
- general meetings should be open to anyone from the school community. However only members of the group would be entitled to vote.

Constitution

It is a legal requirement that a constitution is adopted as soon as possible after forming a group. Any group that operates without an approved constitution will not be covered by DECD insurance and MUST NOT undertake any activities, fundraising, events etc.

The model constitution for parent groups may be found on the SAASPC website www.saaspc.org.au. It is good practice for the parent group to review its operations every 2-3 years and to update its constitution if required.

Activities of a parent group

Possible activities could be

- organising information and welcome events for new students and parents at the school
- helping with school events and functions, such as a sports day, quiz night or a book fair
- organising second hand book and uniform schemes
- organising fundraising activities
- helping to cater or work at fundraising and social activities
- assisting in the preparation of school newsletters, handbooks and calendars
- running, or helping in, the canteen or with special school lunch days
- providing parent views to school leadership about school policies such as codes of behaviour, anti-bullying, homework or uniform that have been identified by the school for review.

Always remember that the education, learning and wellbeing of children should at all times be the main consideration of the parent group.

In schools a parent group is able, as an affiliated body of the Council, to enjoy similar benefits in respect of incorporation, insurance etc provided that its activities are sanctioned by the school principal.

More information about parent groups can be found on the SAASPC website www.saaspc.org.au and we are always ready to assist and to provide advice so don't hesitate to contact us - GPO Box 2126 Adelaide SA 5001 tel 8272 4640 freecall 1800 724 640 email info@saaspc.org.au.

SACE UPDATE

Welcome back to the new school year.

I feel honoured to be leading the SACE Board and continuing on with the journey of providing South Australians with the best possible education and platform for future success.

South Australia's public education system is world class and this was one of the factors that attracted my family and me to leave the UK and make this beautiful state our home more than 10 years ago. Prior to that I had visited a few South Australian 'Learning-to-Learn' schools and was blown away by the public education system and how articulate the students were about their learning.

The SACE is world class, not only because of the new record set for SACE completers in 2017 (15,175), but also because each student is provided with the opportunity to learn the skills they will need to be successful in the 21st century. This is the value proposition our SACE offers – learning at the pace of change.

A key example of this is the Research Project. This subject captures much of what we want our students to learn – the ability to research information and defuse fake news, the ability to question and the ability to apply knowledge in ways that they have not rehearsed. The development of these skills is so important to all students that gaining at least a C- in this subject is a condition of achieving the SACE. The number of students who achieve C- or better in the Research Project has risen from 15,025 students in 2011 to 16,613 students in 2017.

The importance of the Research Project has been reinforced by Flinders University, who have started to incorporate students'



MARTIN WESTWELL
CHIEF EXECUTIVE
SACE BOARD OF SA

grades from the Research Project in their admissions processes.

In October last year the Western Australian Curriculum Authority visited the SACE Board to find out more about our Research Project, as they too acknowledge the higher educational value in asking students to question and research ideas on topics that inspire them.

Later this year we will become the first jurisdiction in Australia to introduce end-of-year electronic examinations for Year 12 students, with English Literary Studies students being the first to use the new format. The move to electronic examinations also reflects how our students are learning in schools, further education and the workplace.

Change can be difficult and, as parents, I encourage you to engage with the SACE Board to ask questions about our modernisation program.

This month we launched a SACE Facebook page, designed to encourage a two way conversation and encourage greater understanding and reassurance about how we preparing students for life beyond high school.

We are continuing to work hard at the SACE Board to ensure our all students are learning at the pace of change.

www.facebook.com/thesace

SNAPSHOT OF 2017 SACE RESULTS IN SA

- 15,175 students achieved their SACE in 2017, compared to 15,003 in December 2016, an increase of 172 students
- The overall completion rate of those aiming to finish their SACE in 2017 was 97.3 per cent, up from 96.3 per cent the previous year. The completion rate for females was 98.2 per cent, and for males 96.4 per cent
- 4,050 country students completed their SACE, up from 3,995 in 2016
- 377 Aboriginal students completed their SACE, up from 319 in 2016
- 235 students with intellectual disabilities completed at least one modified subject, up from 226 the previous year
- 1196 subject Merits were awarded with 920 students achieving at least one Merit
- 12,153 students gained an Australian Tertiary Admission Rank for entry into universities, up from 11,982 in 2016
- 7,897 female students completed their SACE, down from 7,963 and 7,278 males, up from 7,040
- 6,324 students completed their SACE with a vocational education and training component, compared to 6,330 in 2016
- 2,205 students acquired a Certificate III VET qualification while achieving their SACE, compared to 1,927 the previous year
- 1,433 students counted a VET Certificate III or higher toward their ATAR, up from 1,235 in 2016
- 13,479 students received a TAFE SA selection score, rising from 13,423 in 2016
- 28 students will receive Governor of South Australia Commendations, including 4 who scored Merits for five or more subjects including the Research Project

ABORIGINAL BASKETBALL ACADEMY

AT WOODVILLE HIGH SCHOOL

The Aboriginal Basketball Academy (ABA) was an idea of two close friends who were passionate about basketball. They were also passionate about pathways to success available for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) youth in this sport. Those two long term friends were Port Power's Paul Vandenberg and Tim Brenton, former members of the Woodville Warriors who also competed at national level.

The sport of basketball has the power to provide positive experiences and outcomes including friendship, travelling the world and playing at the highest possible level. With the support of Woodville High School and ABA Board Members Paul Vandenberg, Tim Brenton, Scott Whitmore and Craig Gilbert the dream of having an Aboriginal basketball academy came to fruition in 2017 after Woodville High School successfully applied for a specialist schools grant through the Department of Education and Child Development. The focus of the program was to support active young ATSI students struggling to engage at school but who love to be on the courts. The program also offered the opportunity for year 12 students' SACE completion through the incorporation of Integrated Learning.

The ABA runs every Friday of the school term and focuses on completing the Certificate II in Sport and Recreation. Students arrive at The Warehouse, facilities provided generously by the City of Charles Sturt Council. Upon arrival, students are provided with a hearty breakfast to prepare their bodies and mind for a day of learning and training. The intent behind completing the Certificate II in Sport and Recreation is to provide students with opportunities to get a qualification in an industry they are interested in. The hope is to inspire and prepare students to be successful in their education arena and to look forward to higher education pathways such as TAFE and university. Students currently involved in the program have just completed their studies and will be awarded with their certificates shortly. We have seen 10 students successfully complete the qualification with two year 12s who have been able to complete their SACE thanks to the ABA. Who knows where the qualification could take them or what chapter it will help them create in their life?

Morning Musters, led by ABA Program Mentor, Joey Wyatt, bring awareness to the positives of the culture which is explored through recent media stories, therefore identifying modern leaders in their communities. The focus is on empowering our young people and inspiring them to achieve their best through positive stories within their communities. Morning Muster discussions have ranged from cultural awareness to exploration of the first Indigenous orthopaedic surgeon, Anthony Murray. Bringing in local role models who have achieved success in



their chosen field and sport to talk with students about their pathway has also provided the opportunity for students to discuss hurdles and highlights of their careers, a truly inspirational and collaborative occasion. The Morning Muster also provides the chance for students to identify barriers for ATSI young people in the community through creating a safe space for open discussions amongst the group as well as providing the opportunity to celebrate the success of individual students.

Having a program mentor makes the ABA unique. Joey Wyatt has been instrumental in supporting students throughout the program to address wellbeing barriers they may be facing outside of their education which could impact engagement. Having a 'go to' person for the young people and that extra support has been invaluable throughout the year and allows the ABA to have an ATSI role model in the class at all times.

In the pilot year of the program there have been a number of unforgettable moments. Students met with Susan Close, Minister of Education and key stakeholder of the program, at the start of the ABA and discussed their involvement with her. Students have travelled to local businesses such as Pushing Performance and Basketball SA to complete practical components of the Certificate II in Sport and Recreation. Without the support of these local businesses and their dedicated staff students would not be able to experience what it is really like to work in the sport, fitness and recreation industry.

Students completed a five day work experience at Woodville Gardens Birth -7 School and assumed the role of a coach within the established basketball program. Students engaged with the local primary school students to embed their newly learned knowledge and skills specific to basketball and coaching. Competing in the Bearcats Mid-Season Tournament brought out student's growth mindset in the competitive sporting environment and allowed students to implement their skills as a



team. It was a proud moment from the sidelines for the staff and families of the ABA to see the determination, group bonding, positivity, professionalism and sportsmanship of each individual student. Basketball SA visited the ABA to teach the ABA students the ins and outs of officiating the game they love, therefore, extending their knowledge of the game and providing them with the opportunity for employment through the former St Clair Recreation Centre. One student took up this opportunity and was able to commence casual employment.

One of the highlights of the year was the ABA Fundraiser Luncheon. The ABA secured Patty Mills, one of the most influential Indigenous role models in basketball for ATSI young people, as the guest speaker. Patty spoke to the guests about his journey through sport and the amazing experiences and opportunities he has had due to basketball. However he made a point to emphasise the importance of education and commitment to lifelong learning. A message that resonated with our students and motivated them to get through the second half

of the year. Patty was presented with an ABA jersey and has been spotted wearing it out and about in the USA.

So where to next? The ABA will fall under the South Australian Aboriginal Sports Training Academy in 2018 with funding approved to ensure it continues into the future. We hope to see an increase in numbers, continued improvement in attendance and retention of ATSI students in education and more opportunities for students to better themselves, their futures and inspire others in their community to achieve and chase their dreams. A task for the future would be to explore other opportunities that the sport of basketball can offer and how the ABA could support students in rural communities to follow their basketball dreams. It has been an incredible year and the students within the program are truly inspiring individuals.

Jess Roberts

FLO Teacher, Woodville High School



SOUTH AUSTRALIAN ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL PARENT COMMUNITIES

ANNUAL REPORT 2016-2017

The South Australian Association of School Parent Communities (SAASPC) is the peak organisation which represents the interests of all parents and parent groups in South Australian public preschools and schools. SAASPC has always been, and continues to be, a strong supporter of, and advocate for, public education.

The association works to promote parent interest, involvement and participation in preschools and schools and to encourage the growth of positive partnerships with parents and communities. This is becoming increasingly important as research shows that if parents are involved positively in their children's learning then the school outcomes for their children are likely to be enhanced.

2016 was a significant year for SAASPC. After much consultation, a motion was passed at the AGM to not only change our name to South Australian Association of School Parent Communities but to restructure the association. While our focus has not changed, the name change does reflect our membership which consists of parent groups, governing councils, management committees and individuals interested in public education. The restructured association now has an Executive Committee consisting of a maximum of 14 people which manages the association. The details can be seen in our constitution at <http://www.saaspc.org.au/assets/saaspc-constitution-2016.pdf>.

Executive Committee meetings

The Executive committee must meet at least four times throughout the year and this year it met on six occasions. In June, our guest speaker was Professor Alan Reid (chairperson of the Public Education Advisory Committee) who described the recently released Statement on Public Education

Conference

The annual conference was held on 13 September and focused on how parents can support their child/ren with special needs. While the attendance numbers were a little disappointing the speakers provided much valuable information which was appreciated by all delegates.

Communications

Website and social networking

Our website continues to be updated and the statistics show that in 2016/17 it received over 60,000 hits. We continue to post information on our Facebook page and on our Twitter account.

Publications

Parents Say magazine

This year we also had changes in the magazine when we took the decision to have fewer pages, less advertising but more information, plus a new publisher and distributor. We hope those who receive it are liking the new format. The magazine is distributed free to all South Australian public preschools (one copy) and schools (two copies) as part of our commitment as a recipient of a ministerial grant. Private subscriptions are also available. Included in it is up to date information from regular contributors such as the Minister for Education, the Chief Executive Department for Education and Child Development (DECD), and The SACE Board. Items from preschools and schools are invited, especially news about their special programs or events. Information about recent developments in education is of course, also included. The magazine is available on our website shortly after its publication.

Net Working

A quarterly newsletter, Net Working, is compiled and distributed to affiliated preschools and schools by post and email, in between editions of Parents Say.

Handbook (for parent groups – affiliated committees)

The SAASPC handbook on good practice in operating a parent group is provided free to new affiliates and is also available for downloading from our website at no charge. Hard copies can also be purchased.

Acronym list

A list of education acronyms has been compiled and is available on our website.

SAASPC brochures

SAASPC Is is our general brochure on the association and is available in print and on the website. In addition a series of 'SAASPC's Tips' parent brochures has been developed. These are: Starting school, Starting secondary school, Parent teacher interviews, SAASPC information sessions, Affiliated committees and parent groups and Parental engagement. These are also available on the website.

Media

SAASPC president, Jenice Zerna, as our media spokesperson, continues to be asked to provide comment by print and TV media outlets. This year the topics were again very varied and

covered school uniform policy/dress code, school swimming education, literacy month, handwriting and how it is taught, school hats and dangers of cords, vaccinations, the AEU's state of schools report, students with disabilities in mainstream schools and the Right bite program.

Consultations and Invitations

SAASPC receives many invitations to attend launches, significant events and conferences, to meet with consultants and to submit responses to papers and inquires. Some of the work undertaken this year included

- attending the ARACY parent engagement conference in Melbourne
- attending SA Excellence in Public Education awards
- attending Children's Week launch and Minister's awards for Children's Week
- attending SACE Art show
- attending parent forum on strengthening languages in public schools
- attending SA government budget lockup
- attending Teachers Registration Board meeting for stakeholders on arrangements for teachers with provisional registration
- attending launch of Australian Council for Children and the Media Little Big Shots children's film festival
- submission on DECD merit policy and procedures
- submission on DECD volunteer policy
- submission to Education Standards Board on standards for schools
- submission to Flinders University on revision of education degree courses
- as well as visiting schools and speaking to many parents and principals.

We were pleased to again be invited to sit on the panel which assesses the applications for the Parent Initiatives in Education (PIE) grants for preschools and schools.

In addition, we have met on a number of occasions with Hon Susan Close, Minister for Education and Child Development, Mr Rick Persse, the new Chief Executive of the Department for Education and Child Development and Hon John Gardner, Shadow Education Minister.

Information sessions

Throughout the year requests are received for SAASPC to provide information sessions to parents in preschools and schools. These are

Responding to abuse and neglect: education and care information sessions for volunteers (previously known as Mandatory reporting of child abuse)

Since 1991 SAASPC has been providing two hour information sessions about mandatory notification of child abuse for volunteers in preschools and schools. While SAASPC presenters of the DECD program for volunteers have found demand has lessened with the availability of the online program this year we delivered 93 sessions with 983 people from 186 sites; and travelled to many parts of the state – from the south east to the Riverland and in many city venues in order to do so.

Principal / preschool director panel selection information sessions

SAASPC continued its agreement with the Minister for Education and Child Development to provide these free sessions for Governing Council parent nominees on selection panels for preschool directors and principals and for others from schools and preschools who may be interested to learn about the process. We consider this training to be an important factor in assisting the parent nominee to be a confident and equal member of the panel, as the other members of the panel are required to be trained. We continue to revise our presentation in consultation with the Ethical Conduct Unit of DECD.

Over the last twelve months, 12 sessions have been conducted, attended by 94 people from 72 sites including preschools, primary, high and area, special and multicampus schools.

Committees and boards

SAASPC Officers continue to represent parents on committees, boards and organisations. SAASPC welcomes feedback from parents regarding their concerns and issues, in order that we can truly represent a wide range of views. Below are some of the committees and organisations on which we have represented parents over the past year

- DECD Parents in Education (PIE) Week Reference Group
- SA Dental Service Consumer Advisory Panel
- SA National Quality Agenda Stakeholder Advisory Group
- SACE Board Parent Associations Group
- Australian Council for Children and the Media Executive Committee

We were pleased to be asked by the Minister to nominate, and to have that nomination accepted, for a parent of a student with a disability to be on the Ministerial Advisory Committee: Children and Students with Disability.

Acknowledgments

On 30 January, Marion McCarthy, a long standing and much loved and valued member of our organisation passed away. Marion was first elected to be a metropolitan vice president in 1973 and from then on she continued as a member of the Executive Committee in a number of other capacities; in 1984 she was appointed editor of Parents Say. In recognition of her

continuous and valuable work in education Marion was awarded the Order of Australia Medal (OAM) in 1997 and in September 2016 she was awarded the Premiers Certificate of recognition for over 43 years of outstanding volunteer service to public education. Her work for SAASPC and her unassuming and thoughtful input into discussions was highly valued by those who were privileged to meet her and work with her. She will be greatly missed.

We acknowledge the continuing support of the Minister for Education and Child Development through the provision of our operational grant which includes funding for Responding to Abuse and Neglect information sessions and Principal/Preschool Director Panel Selection information sessions.

We also appreciate the support of the many people within DECD

who are always most approachable and willing to speak with us and provide us with invaluable advice.

SAASPC is an organisation of volunteers and we are fortunate that so many people willingly give their time and expertise to ensure that the voice of the parents of children and young people in South Australian public preschools and schools is heard. We look forward to the challenges of the next twelve months and thank all those who have supported us as we work to ensure that all South Australian children have access to a public education system which aims for equity and excellence and which supports parents as partners in the education of their children.

In turn we acknowledge the incredible and vital work being done by thousands of volunteers in SA public preschools and schools.

DECD PLANS FOR 2018

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

standards from our principals but we don't expect them to do it alone. They will receive additional support this year and in future. Ten more education directors and local education teams – 40 people in total – will help in their efforts to lift student achievement. The new education directors started in January and recruitment of additional positions is underway. All teams will be in place March and as a result all education directors will have a smaller number of schools and preschools in their portfolios, allowing them to provide greater levels of support.

We are also working to make your life as engaged parents easier.

This year we will be procuring and trialling a new Education Management System. Much of its function will aim to lift the administrative burden off schools but it will include a portal which will give parents access to information about their child's achievements, attendance, events and contacts. One of the functions will be alerting parents to issues such as non attendance or communicating emergency information. Procurement and contract negotiations are under way.

Your schools value and need your support as they embark on what will be a big, activity filled year. Thank you for your enthusiasm.

GWEN SECOMB OAM

Gwen retired from SAASPC last year after 33 years of dedication to SAASPC and education as a volunteer. After attending many of our conferences, Gwen joined the committee of the association in 1984 as Treasurer; later she went on to hold the position of President and for many years she was the Network Liaison Officer, the position that she held at the time of her retirement.

For her work and services to education Gwen was awarded an OAM in January 1996, an acknowledgement and award very well deserved.

Gwen worked tirelessly for SAASPC. As a country officer she spent many many hours on the road travelling to attend meetings and present information sessions; willingly going to wherever she was needed.

Over the years Gwen represented SAASPC on countless committees, reference groups and boards eg Family Life, Napcan, Children's Services Consultative Committee, Department for Education and Children's Services Child Protection Committee, Parents in Education (PIE Grants) Committee plus many more. She always put forward the parent perspective very clearly and gave thoughtful feedback at meetings and to consultation documents.

Gwen also organised and presented our information sessions for Principal selection training (merit) and Responding to abuse and neglect – education and care (mandatory notification) – over the years this amounted to many hundreds of sessions.

Like many of our previous officers, Gwen acted as a mentor to others, sharing her knowledge and experience willingly. She was a wealth of information for us all and became a good friend to many of us. She is missed by all of us who had the opportunity to work with her. We wish Gwen the very best in her retirement – a well earned chance to relax and enjoy life. Thank you so much Gwen.



TERM DATES 2018

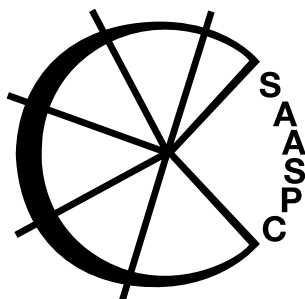
Term 1	29 January - 13 April	Term 3	23 July– 28 September
Term 2	30 April– 6 July	Term 4	15 October – 14 December

Is your child's future important to you?
We know meetings can sometimes be boring
but... WE NEED YOU so why not join our
Executive Committee?

You may be surprised about what you learn.

For more information, contact SAASPC.

Telephone 1800 724 640



SAASPC

Freecall 1800 724 640

Phone (08) 8272 4640 Fax (08) 8522 4084

Email info@saaspc.org.au

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